

The Chronicle and Index

OF THE UNITARIAN SOCIETY.

No. 48, Vol. iv.] BELFAST, DECEMBER 1st, 1884.

[For Gratuitous Circulation

THE Rev. J. C. Street acknowledges, with thanks, the receipt of the following subscriptions in aid of the gratuitous publication and circulation of the *Chronicle and Index*:—A Friend, 2/6; Miss Sugden, Leeke, 2/6; a Friend, Comber, 2/6.

The Sunday Evening Services at Rosemary Street, conducted by Rev. J. C. Street, have been largely attended during the month. The subjects treated have been as follows:—

Nov. 2. Steps unto Heaven.

9. Ministering Angels.

16. A Medical Hero and Martyr.

23. Henry Fawcett, M.P.

30. The Divine Light.

On Saturday evening, November 1st, the closing meeting for the present season, in connection with the Sunday School, was held at Moneyrea. The schoolroom was crowded by scholars and friends. After tea had been partaken of, Mr. D. M'Master took the chair and delivered an encouraging address. The premiums were then distributed, accompanied with a cheery word in each case, by J. M. Darbishire, Esq., of Belfast. Addresses of a pleasing character were then delivered by Revs. G. W. Bannister, of Bolton; T. Dunkerley, B.A., of Comber; W. Reynolds, B.A., of Mountpottinger; and J. C. Street, of Belfast. Mr. W. Bennett and Mr. Lamont expressed the thanks of the meeting to Mr. Darbishire and the ministers who had taken part in the proceedings; and after a vote of thanks to the ladies and the Chairman, the Rev. J. C. Street pronounced a benediction, and the interesting proceedings terminated.

THE "Children's Services" have recom-

menced at "Hopeton Street" and "Rosemary Street." At the former place, on October 19th, Mr. Bulmer gave out the hymns, Miss J. E. Bruce read the lessons, and Rev. J. C. Street offered prayer, and then delivered an address on the parable of "The ten virgins." There was a large attendance, and the interest manifested by the children was very great. On November 2nd, the "service" was held in Rosemary Street. Mr. Darbishire conducted the devotional part of the service, the Rev. G. W. Bannister, of Bolton read the lesson, and the Rev. J. C. Street delivered an address on "The love of God." The attendance was very encouraging. On November 16th, the second service for the season was held at Hopeton Street, when Rev. J. C. Street delivered an address suggested by the death of one of the former scholars. He was listened to with great interest and attention.

In our last issue we were able to announce that the Rev. J. H. Bibby had accepted a call to Ballee. We are glad further to state that he has entered upon his ministry, and was solemnly inducted into his charge on Wednesday, November 26th, in the presence of many of his brother ministers and of a large congregation. A happy settlement has been effected, and there is every promise of a successful ministry. We give a brief report of the induction service elsewhere.

It is with great pleasure we report that the Rev. G. W. Bannister, of Bolton, has accepted a unanimous invitation to become minister of the Moneyrea Congregation. Mr. Bannister will be cordially welcomed in this country, and will prove a great addition to the ranks of the

preachers of a free and reverent Christianity. He and the Moneyrea Congregation have our heartiest good wishes for their welfare.

ON Sunday evening, November 9th, in the Church of the Second Congregation, Rosemary Street, the Rev. J. C. Street gave a lecture entitled "Steps to Heaven." He said poets of all lands had sung about heaven; prophets of all religions had dreamed about it; the universal human heart yearned for it; and men and women of to-day believed that there was a heaven. Where was it? That question came to them in manifold ways and in many tongues. Most of the answers to that inquiry spoke of heaven as some distant place beyond the gates of death and beyond the bounds of time, far away in the vast immensity above the stars, and in the midst of which there was the radiance of God's throne. Some, however, who were not content to wait for distant glories and far off joys had affirmed that there was a heaven, but that it was here upon earth, and found its most sacred place in the human heart; that it began with the first unselfish act, and grew with a life of purity. He had read to them of Jacob's dream of heaven, and many a man had had similar dreams, but they were nought but dreams, except in the sense that dreams themselves were often the poetic colouring of the divine things of our daily life and toil. He knew nothing of the heaven inhabited by souls saved through the substitutionary sufferings of others, and when he gave his answer to the inquiry what was heaven he would have to leave behind all the ordinary teachings of the Churches and of theology. He knew nothing of any far off New Jerusalem with golden streets. That picture expressed no reality to him. He knew nothing, and wished to know nothing, of a heaven guarded by walls, garrisoned by angels with flaming swords to keep out from its glories any anxious, eager souls striving to get in. Yet he believed in a heaven as one of the great realities both of his theology and his life. The heaven in which he had the strongest belief was the one on earth, now possible to every human being; a heaven which might be realised and glorified by personal human life. That heaven was here,

and was, perhaps, the best of all prophecies of the heaven to come. The steps into heaven were those simple steps of everyday life, and were open to glorious fulfilment as well by those who broke stones by the wayside as by those who ruled in the great assemblies of men. Far be it from him to say that when they had entered into the kingdom of heaven here, had heard its music, and felt its divine benedictions, that there was nothing more to come. He believed that when earthly toil and turmoil were over, when the whole of our mortal life had been fairly fought, when the work pertaining to our ordinary career had been nobly finished here, then there should be in the eternal ages a sphere for the full development of the majestic powers of man which only just began to express themselves. He believed that time only served the purpose of eternity, and that life here was but the prophecy of life to come.

A VERY interesting meeting was held at Dromore, on Friday, November 13th, under the presidency of the Rev. David Thompson, *pastor loci*, in connection with the opening of the spacious and handsome new Schoolroom and Congregational Hall. There was a crowded attendance, and it included representatives of all denominations in the district, as well as a considerable number of Unitarian ministers who had come together to congratulate the congregation and minister on the successful accomplishment of their work. It was pleasant to see the Rev. Mr. Rentoul, the Presbyterian minister of Dromore, present, and to listen to his cheery and encouraging speech. The meeting began at seven o'clock, and was carried on with unflagging interest until close upon midnight. There were numerous brief and sparkling speeches, and the music provided was of the most attractive character. The whole tone and spirit of the proceedings were of a nature to give joy to all who were present. We trust that much good work will be done in the new building.

During the past month, the meetings of the Rosemary Street Mutual Improvement Association have been large and the papers read most

interesting, giving rise on each occasion to animated discussions. Mr. O'Connor's paper entitled "An Unholy Alliance" was well received, and Mr. Cuming's treatise on "Treason" met with much friendly criticism. The discussion on "Assisted Emigration," opened by Mr. Vere Foster, was carried on with great ability and vigour by Messrs. Hunter, Roche, Cuming, M'Gowan, Fitz-Henry, Jennings, and O'Connor. On Monday, the 24th, there was a thoughtful paper from Mr. Worthington, giving "A few Wayside Ideas concerning Life." The paper was ably dealt with by Messrs. Neill, M'Gowan, Roche, Cuming, Fitz-Henry and Jennings.

The Barrington Class for the study of Political Economy, which was so successful last year, will be continued under the auspices of this Association. The lecturer appointed for this year is Mr. Fitz-Henry, B.A., a distinguished student and member of this Association.

WE insert with pleasure the following report connected with Mr. Bannister's farewell at Bolton. It will let our friends at Moneyrea, know how Mr. Bannister was esteemed in England:—

FAREWELL MEETING AT THE FREE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

On Tuesday evening, November 18th, a farewell tea meeting was held in Free Christian Church, Lark Street, on the occasion of the departure of the Rev. G. W. Bannister, who has accepted the ministry of the Unitarian Church, Moneyrea, Ireland. After tea, the Rev. C. C. Coe, F.G.S., presided, and was supported by the Revs. J. J. Wright, T. Mackereth, F.R.A.S., E. Allen, S. Thompson (Rivington), W. Sharman, F.G.S. (Preston), Messrs. Frank Taylor and James Kirkman.

The Rev. T. Mackereth said he had determined at great inconvenience, to be present that evening to bid good-bye to Mr. Bannister. He had known him ever since he came to Bolton, and he was quite sure he would be useful where he was going. He was very sorry to lose him. They could sympathise with one another in trying to do good work in

the place in which they lived, and there was one thing upon which they could agree—that there was one God who, in his infinite love and wisdom, was doing all he could to make poor creatures better; and he wanted helpers and instruments. If they must do good they must have Christian workers, and Mr. Bannister had joined in that good work heartily, and recognised a brother in others, and he (Mr. Mackereth) recognised a brother in him. He wished every success and prosperity to Mr. Bannister and his dear wife, in his future undertakings.

The Rev. E. Allen spoke of the work Mr. Bannister had carried on in that place, and said at present there was a dark cloud resting over them. It was sad that the people should have to part with their pastor after having worked together so harmoniously, but that dark cloud had a silver lining, and something bright would come. He thought everyone who had known Mr. Bannister from his first residence in Bolton must have respected him. He had been willing to labour in anything which he thought would do good; willing to become all things to all men. He knew something of the place where Mr. Bannister was going, and he was sure he would find a wide sphere of labour there—plenty to do and plenty of material to work upon—and as Ireland was supposed to be suffering from such great wrongs and injustices, he was sure he would do what he could, according to the light that was in him, to set things right and improve the condition of the Irish people.

The Rev. C. C. Coe said it was to show his great esteem and affection for Mr. Bannister, who was leaving, that he occupied the position of Chairman that evening. He felt these separations of ministers and people were always of a very painful character, and there was one especially painful feature in the departure of Mr. Bannister. He was inclined to think congregations were not in the habit of observing all the good qualities of their pastor until they were about to part, and if a little more kindly feeling were exercised earlier it would be better. He was not railing at them, but only said that was the general course

of things. He thought Mr. Bannister had proved himself to be a remarkably good preacher, and two or three congregations would only have been too glad to secure his services. They had received at his hands much instruction, which he trusted would long remain in their hearts after he left then; and he need not say how good was the work which he had done as a teacher as well as a preacher. He had also extended his Christian sympathy and practical help among the poor. In the name of the little band of ministers which met together from time to time in and around Bolton, and were led to sympathise with one another in their troubles, and rejoice in their successes, and were also ready to stimulate one another in their duties, he ventured to say they felt the loss of Mr. Bannister very deeply (hear, hear). They would miss his words of wisdom and kindly sympathy, and it would be a positive loss and sorrow to them to have him no longer amongst them. He was going to quite a different sphere of labour, and he would carry there the same spirit and devoted zeal he had exhibited in Bolton; and he trusted he would receive a larger amount of success than even that which he had been privileged to see attending his labours here.

The Rev. W. Sharman said he had extreme sympathy with the work done by Mr. Bannister among them. The congregation of that place stood in a very important period of their history, and he hoped they might find means to carry on some of the good works which they had been employed upon in the past, and that whatever came, that they would not cease to connect themselves with some form of worship.

The Rev. S. Thompson said Mr. Bannister had been a great worker, and had succeeded to a very large extent in filling the place with those who were in need of being brought into such a place as that. He expressed a hope that after their minister had left, the people would be able to hold themselves together as an united band, and that they would be able to do good work. If it was only in their Sunday School they would do a great work in the neighbourhood. He said Mr. Bannister had been very friendly to all the ministers

in the circuit, and he knew his heart was in the work, and wherever he went he would be able to effect good. They might congratulate him that he was going to a larger sphere of labour, and he had no doubt Mr. Bannister would succeed in keeping his congregation together and carrying out his work there.

Mr. Frank Taylor said from what he had seen and heard of Mr. Bannister he had found him a man of culture and wide reading, a man of genial and kindly temper, and a man of avowed spirit, who was anxious to do a really good and religious work. He assured Mr. Bannister that it was with great regret he should miss his kindly presence, and in going to Ireland he was leaving behind him many who shared that regret, and who would follow him with good wishes and God-speed in his new labours.

Mr. James Grundy read a letter from Mr. J. P. Thomasson, M.P., in which that gentleman expressed exceeding sorrow that he was unable to attend and show his regard for the good work Mr. Bannister had done in Bolton. He trusted he might find increased scope for usefulness in his new sphere, and hoped it would be found practicable to keep on the good work done by the Sunday School. Mr. Grundy also read letters of apology from the Revs. J. Freeston (Stalybridge), Philip Vance-Smith (Hindley), and R. Wilkinson, Ainsworth, and various other gentlemen.

Mr. Grundy then presented Mr. Bannister with an address on behalf of himself, Mr. J. Kirkman, and the congregation, expressing admiration of Mr. Bannister's ability as a preacher, and of his untiring and original method as a teacher at the evening classes held in connection with that church; and also admiring his Christlike sympathy with the poor, showing itself not in words only, but in real practical sympathy, and wishing him every success in his new ministry.

Mr. James Kirkman also spoke of the good and successful work carried on in that place by Mr. Bannister, and endorsed all the kind expressions of sympathy which had been made.

The Rev. G. W. Bannister, in reply, said the kind congratulations which he had received

had touched him very much, as coming from those who knew him best. He felt a great deal of gratification at the kind words that had been spoken there, and also said to him in private; and he felt very much the kind words of his brother ministers who had spoken that evening. He had enjoyed very much the friendly intercourse he had had with Unitarian ministers of South Lancashire, and he had always looked forward to their meetings with a great deal of pleasure. Their Church occupied a peculiar position, and one which was very liable to be misunderstood, and, moreover, one which it had been difficult to work. Its position was that of raising a Church not bound by any basis of creed, but by the uniformity of belief. As he brought his four years' ministry to a close he could say no one had ever interfered with him, and no one had tried to fetter him in any way whatever in giving the freest and fullest expression to anything that he felt lay upon his conscience to speak. He went on to review the work of the Church since he became minister, and in conclusion he very heartily thanked all present for coming to say farewell to him and to give him an opportunity of saying farewell to them. He said farewell, and they could not more heartily wish him well than he wished for all of them the richest blessings of our Heavenly Father.

The Rev. J. J. Wright entirely sympathised with Mr. Bannister's labours, and congratulated him on having been called to a larger sphere of labour, for much as he loved his labours here, there was a better sphere for him where he was going. He would meet with a hearty and loyal people, who would stand by him and rally round him. (Applause).

A vote of thanks was, on the motion of Mr. Grundy, seconded by the Rev. G. W. Bannister, accorded to the Chairman, and the proceedings then terminated.—*Bolton Evening Guardian*.

ORDINATION AT BALLEE.

On Wednesday, November 26th, the Rev. Joseph H. Bibby was ordained to the pastoral charge of the Ballee Nonsubscribing Presbyterian Church, Downpatrick. The opening

services were conducted by the Rev. William Napier; after which the Rev. John A. Kelly (Rademon) preached from 1 Peter, 2nd chapter, 21st verse. The Rev. John Miskimmin defended Presbyterian ordination. The Rev. Mr. Bibby, on being asked if he still accepted the call, replied—"I do, sir. I have received this call not only as the voice of my people, but as the voice of God. So long as God gives me strength I hope to go with my people into the quiet region of devotion, and, if the time should come, as it may, that my people should wish me to go forth from their midst, I trust I shall have strength to feel that that also is the voice of God." Mr. Scott then offered the ordination prayer. Rev. Thomas Dunkerley, B.A. (Comber), delivered the charge to the congregation, and the Rev. J. C. Street the charge to the minister. Rev. David Gordon (Downpatrick) concluded by prayer.

After the services, the ministers and friends were entertained to dinner in the schoolroom adjacent to the church. There was a large attendance.

The Rev. Mr. Bibby asked a blessing, and, after dinner, the Rev. Mr. Scott returned thanks.

Mr. Joseph Gracey was called to the chair.

Rev. Mr. Kelly, on behalf of Mr. Chambers (secretary of the congregation), read letters of apology from Rev. Dr. Woods, Rev. Samuel C. Nelson, and Rev. Robert J. Orr. A letter from Rev. Mr. Fallon, rector of Ballee, was the subject of considerable merriment. It read as follows:—"My dear Sir,—You will not, I am sure, reasonably expect that one set for the defence of the Gospel and the maintenance of the British Constitution in the parish—(laughter)—could be present at the meeting to be held on Wednesday—(renewed laughter)—in the Unitarian Church at Ballee. Professional consistency and Conservative principles—(ironical cheers)—alike forbid my acceptance of your polite invitation, for which, however, I am much obliged to yourself personally." (Laughter). Further letters of apology were read from the Rev. James Hall, Rev. C. J. M'Alester, Rev. W. Magowan, Rev. James Cooper, Rev. Mr. Thomas, Rev. J. Kennedy,

Rev. Alexander Gordon, Rev. E. Crooks, Rev. J. A. Newell, and the Rev. Hugh Moore.

The Chairman, on rising, was warmly received. He said they would see from a letter that had been read that their loyalty was doubted. (Laughter.) He thought the man must indeed be mistaken that doubted the loyalty of the Unitarian body. (Cheers.) He thought they would be a very peculiar people and zealous of ill-works who would be disloyal to their present Queen. (Hear, hear.) They all recognised in her a kind, wise mother to her people, and a worthy example to her subjects. (Cheers.) He had therefore great pleasure in proposing "The Queen, Prince and Princess of Wales, and the rest of the Royal Family."

The sentiment was received most enthusiastically, the audience rising to their feet and cheering.

The Chairman next gave "The Lord Lieutenant and Prosperity to Ireland." He felt confident that when party feeling had subsided it would be conceded that we never had in Dublin Castle a more high-minded, courageous, and noble man than Earl Spencer. (Applause.)

Mr. Davidson, J.P., in responding, defended the action of Earl Spencer since he took the reins of office, and proceeded to say, with reference to prosperity to Ireland, that he was sorry the country was not so prosperous as could be wished. He trusted that times would improve, and hoped that Ireland had a prosperous future. With the other friends present, he had to extend a hearty welcome to Mr. Bibby. (Applause.)

Rev. Thomas Dunkerley proposed "The Newly Ordained Minister." He did so with all his heart, and with the greater zest because he was very much in Mr. Bibby's position. They had both come from England to Ireland, and to be Irishmen. (Applause.) Although Mr. Davidson had said that the country was passing through hard times, yet the people were not any better off across the Channel at the present time. Our country would, however, live through it all—(hear, hear)—and would spring from its present position to still greater eminence. Therefore, in proposing success to the new minister of Ballee congregation, he knew they would respond to the sentiment as fellow-countrymen. Mr. Bibby would live with his people, he trusted, until the dawn of brighter and happier times—times which must sooner or later come; for there was a God above them all, who would not forget "ould Ireland." (Applause.)

Rev. Mr. Bibby, who was cordially greeted, said he was exceedingly thankful to them for the kind and hearty way in which they had received his name. They could, he was sure, fully appreciate what he said when he told them no more trying time had ever occurred to him in his life than had happened on that day. He only hoped that, as the years roll on, the

heartiness which their hands had shown, and their voices too, would live on, and that he would prove himself worthy of all the heartiness and all the good feelings which had been shown towards him. He had been as well received by the people of Ballee as he could possibly have been by the people of Lancashire—(applause)—and that meant a good deal. This had gone down to the bottom of his heart; and, if there were no other sense of duty in him than that of repaying them, that would be enough to make him serve them in all things. But he thought there was a higher sense of duty than even that. He felt that was a spot where he could do a good solid work—(hear, hear)—and it was to him a cause of thankfulness to God that he had got a people who were ready to receive him with open arms and open hearts. As a member of the Bangor Presbytery he would be loyal, and would work shoulder to shoulder with the other members of the Presbytery; but if the time ever came when he thought it was not doing that which it professed to exist for, then if he did express his opinion, he hoped he would be appreciated as heartily and as fully as he was now. (Applause.) In conclusion, he hoped they would take as unexpressed the very deep feelings which he had in his heart towards both ministers and people. (Applause.)

Mr. Chambers then gave "The Officiating Ministers," and said the Committee of the congregation was very much obliged to them for acceding to the invitation to come to Ballee. He hoped the same good feeling that existed at present would continue to exist amongst them all. (Hear, hear.)

Rev. Mr. Napier, in replying, referred in touching terms to the merits of the last pastor of the congregation. He was greatly pleased with the services of that day, and hoped they were the earnest of a great and noble work to be done in the future at Ballee. The history of that congregation had been a brilliant one. A former minister was the Rev. David White, father-in-law of Mr. Porter, both of whom were clear-headed and noble-hearted men. They all hoped and felt it was their duty to help on the progress of the world. This was only to be accomplished by the imbibing of the principles of Christianity. (Applause.)

Rev. Mr. Scott also responded. He said the Rev. Mr. Bibby was a young brother of whom they had all the highest hopes. He was glad that the members of other Presbyteries had gladly joined the Bangor Presbytery in the services of that day.

Rev. J. A. Kelly proposed "Civil and Religious Liberty the wide world over." Civil and religious liberty in days gone by was a sentiment that required to be brought before the people in a very prominent manner. He did not think we could be under a better constitution than that under which we live. At the

beginning of the meeting he read a letter, which he was glad was received in an amusing spirit. Those who talked about Unitarians as being disloyal knew nothing at all about them—(hear, hear)—and were ignorant of the main end of their existence. It would be generous to suppose that when Mr. Fallon wrote the letter he had been suffering from the toothache. (Laughter, and a Voice—"Something worse.")

Rev. J. C. Street responded. He said whatever embarrassment he might feel as to what capacity he appeared in at that meeting—(laughter)—he had no embarrassment at all in replying to "Civil and Religious Liberty." They had not yet attained the full measure of civil and religious liberty, though many glorious conquests had been won. There was an effort being made now in the United Kingdom to extend the civil liberty of some two million of the inhabitants of this empire, and he was sure there was not one present who did not heartily endorse the action of Mr. Gladstone and his administration in their laudable exertions on behalf of the two millions of the working people. A more loyal people to the British Constitution could not be found in the British Empire than the Unitarian body in the North of Ireland. (Cheers.) There was not to be found within the scope of their Church one man or woman who was not in thorough accord with the loyalty which animated that meeting. Their friend, the clergyman who addressed a letter to them that night, seemed to think that he was in the parish for the defence of the Gospel. He (Mr. Street) hoped he was; he believed he was; but they had set another friend there for the defence of the Gospel—(hear, hear)—and he hoped that, without any spirit of controversy or without any spirit of rivalry, his friend Mr. Bibby would show in his life and devotedness that he stood up for a Gospel which was for the welfare of the community and for the salvation of souls. (Applause.)

The remaining sentiments were—"The Ladies," proposed by the Chairman, and responded to by the Rev. T. Dunkerley and Rev. Mr. Gordon; "The Other Clergymen," responded to by the Rev. Mr. Reynolds, the Rev. Mr. Lancaster, and the Rev. Mr. Shelley; and "The Press."

A vote of thanks having been passed to the Chairman, the proceedings terminated.

THE Treasurer of the Unitarian Society begs to acknowledge receipt of the following subscriptions for 1884:—

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D. Bulmer,	Belfast,	..	..	£0 2 6
Mrs. D. Bulmer,	"	..	..	0 2 6
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Rev. J. H. Bibby, Ballee,	"	..	..	0 7 6

MANSEL SMITH, *Treasurer.*

Rosemary Street Mutual Improvement Association.

THIRTEENTH SESSION, 1884-85.

The Committee have much pleasure in announcing the following

PROGRAMME UNTIL CHRISTMAS 1884.

1884.

- Dec. 1.—Music and Readings.
 " 8.—Miscellaneous (Original) Compositions. Members and Friends.
 " 15—Lecture, "Music." Rev. J. A. Kelly.
 " 22—Paper, "Political Reform." Mr. J. Johnston.

THE OBJECTS OF THE ASSOCIATION

ARE

The intellectual and moral advancement of its members, and the furtherance of fellowship and acquaintance among them.

The Meetings are held on MONDAY EVENINGS at Eight o'clock, in the Rosemary Street Schools.

ADMISSION—To Lectures and Discussion. Members Free; Non-Members, Sixpence each. To Papers, and Music, and Readings—Free.

MEMBER'S SUBSCRIPTION.—4s. per annum, which entitles to the use of the Library. Subscriptions for the Thirteenth Session are now due and should be paid to the Treasurer, THOS. EDENS OSBORNE, at 14, Lombard Street, as early as possible.

The Librarian will be in attendance after service on Sunday Mornings, and on every Monday Evening during the Session.

HESTER B. ASTON, } Hon.
 W. W. DRUMMOND, } Secs.

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W. G. MULLIGAN, Belfast.

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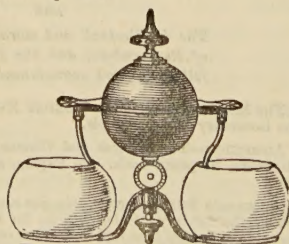
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